

**Waukegan, IL** - This evening U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) joined Waukegan leaders for the gala grand opening of the newly renovated Genesee Theater. Congressman Kirk secured nearly \$1.5 million to renovate the historic theater that welcomed comedian Bill Cosby to host the opening night celebration.

“We are witnessing a rebirth of Waukegan as a renovated Genesee Theater unlocks the economic potential of our downtown area,” said Congressman Kirk. “The reopening of the Genesee is an excellent example of how federal, state and local governments can work together to revitalize our communities.”

Kirk secured funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for architectural planning and construction costs related to the theater’s renovation. Kirk’s predecessor, Congressman John Porter, also secured nearly \$1.5 million for the project bringing the federal government’s share of construction costs to just under \$3 million.

Congressman Kirk recognized the ‘Friends of the Historic Genesee Theater’ who championed the Genesee Theater cause in partnership with the city of Waukegan. The group’s hard work and dedication paid off with the renovation of an historic theater that will be filled with diverse programming and audiences drawn from the region’s evolving art’s community.

“This majestic theater can once again lay claim to the title ‘amusement Mecca of the North Shore’,” said Kirk. “The Genesee Theater will anchor the city’s social and cultural life and be the downtown attraction in a planned redevelopment of Waukegan’s lakefront. We are rebuilding Waukegan with a newly renovated Genesee Theater leading the way.”

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